Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting May 10, 2021

Newly elected Moderator Chip Guercio opened the Annual Town Meeting on Monday, May 10, 2021, at 7:15 p.m. at the Ayer Shirley Middle School Gymnasium, 1 Hospital Road. This year's Annual Town Meeting was held in the Gymnasium instead of the Auditorium, the same as last year, due to the COVID 19 concerns. One hundred sixty (160) fold up chairs were placed 6 feet apart in all directions on the gym floor to provide adequate social distancing. The bleachers were not pulled out so chairs could be placed on the entire gym floor. Masks were highly recommended but not mandated. Any persons without a mask would have been seated in the back row but there was no one who came without a mask. Nine (9) "non-voter" seats were available in the front of the gym as well. Microphones were available only to the moderator, the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, and the Chairman of the Finance Committee, as well as a stand up microphone was available to voters in the center of the middle aisle. Voter cards were not used due to COVID 19 concerns and all votes were either by voice, by raising of the hand of the voter for the moderator to see or by raising of the hand by the voters for the counters to see.

The Town Clerk confirmed the Town Meeting was properly posted. Mike Detillion led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Town Clerk had sworn the following people to serve as tellers/counters: James Thibault, Joe Stanislaw, Ted Landry and Mike Detillion. Judy Stanislaw and Nancy Landry checked voters into the meeting from the Cafeteria. Laurie Witherell greeted voters as they arrived in the gym and directed them to their socially distanced seats. Seventy seven (77) voters in total checked in.

Tim Zessin, Town Counsel from Kopelman and Paige, was in attendance and seated on the "stage" along with the Town Administrator Mike McGovern, Assistant to the Town Administrator Aubrey Thomas, all three Board of Selectmen members, Michaela Horn, Town Accountant, Brian Hildebrant, Chairman of the Finance Committee, and Town Clerk Bill Oelfke.

Copies of the warrant were put on the Town's website, properly posted by the constable, and were available at the check-in area for attendees to bring into the meeting to refer to along with copies of various handouts.

Article 1: Accept Annual Town Report

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 1 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated "To accept the reports of the Board of Selectmen and other Town Officers for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020".

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority.

Article 2: By Law Amendment to Change Board of Selectmen to Select Board

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 2 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated "To see if the Town will vote to amend the General and Zoning Bylaws of the Town by deleting, in each instance in which they appear, all references to "Board of Selectmen," "Selectmen" and "Selectman" and inserting in their place the words, "Select Board" or "Select Board member" or "Select Board members", as appropriate, and further to authorize the Town Clerk to make any non-substantive, ministerial revisions to ensure that gender and numerical issues in related text are revised to properly reflect such change in title; and further, to amend Article IV of the General Bylaws by inserting the following underlined text, and renumbering the existing sections in Article IV accordingly, as follows:

ARTICLE IV SELECT BOARD AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

Select Board. For the purposes of this Bylaw and otherwise, the chief executive of the Town of Shirley shall be referred to as the "Select Board" and members of the Board shall be referred to as "Select Board Members." The Select Board shall have all the powers and duties of a "board of selectmen", as defined under clauses Third A and Fifth B of section 4 of Chapter 7 of the General Laws, and in any other general, special or local law or regulation.

Section 2 <u>Legal Affairs</u>. The Selectmen may appoint a member of the bar in good standing...

Vote requires 2/3rd vote since it involves changing the Zoning By-law.

Hand Vote: Moderator declared Passed by 2/3rd vote by hand count without assistance of counters.

(ATTORNEY GENERAL APPROVED CHANGES TO GENERAL BYLAW BUT DENIED CHANGES TO ZONING BY-LAW DUE TO PLANNING BOARD NOT HOLDING PUBLIC HEARING ON ZONING CHANGES PRIOR TO ANNUAL TOWN MEETING IN LETTER DATED 8/4/2021).

Article 3: Accept Salary Classification Plan & FY 2022 Wage Scale (See Appendices A & B)

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 3 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated "To see if the Town will vote to accept the Salary Classification Plan, as set forth in Appendix A and amend the FY22 Wage Scale to include a 1% COLA effective July 1, 2022, as set forth in Appendix B; or take other action relative thereto."

Note: Error was made regarding effective date of the 1% COLA on the warrant and on the motion made at the meeting. The effective date should have been July 1, 2021, not July 1, 2022. Per phone conversation between Town Administrator and Town Counsel, it was determined that it was only an administrative error, and 1% COLA could be made effective July 1, 2021 as originally planned.

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority

Article 4: Appropriate Omnibus Operating Budget for FY 2022

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the total sum of \$15,705,300 for the Omnibus Operating Budget of the Town for the period beginning July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, as printed in the warrant under Article 4 (but excluding the final paragraph referencing the Overlay, Cherry Sheet, and Snow and Ice), of which \$9,159.00 shall be transferred from the Massachusetts School Building Assistance Program Debt Reserve Account to offset the related debt expense, all in order to defray the operations and other necessary and proper charges, costs, and expenses of the Boards, Commissions, Committees, Officers, and Departments of the Town, together with the payment of debt service, for said Fiscal Year 2022, with each department

considered to be a separate appropriation.

Moderator read each line item and the dollar amount proposed for each line item in the category and asked voters to say "HOLD" if they wished to discuss a specific item in more detail. There were NO HOLDS on any of the line items.

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority.

At the conclusion of Article 4, Elizabeth Quinty called for a "Point of Order". The said "Point of Order" was a motion to "Take an Article out of Order". The specific request was to move Article 21 and discuss and vote on it at this time (after Article 4 but before Article 5). The motion was seconded by James Quinty. A 2/3rd vote is required to "Take an Article out of Order".

Hand Count: Vote was 49 in favor, 11 against (per hand count by the counters) which passed the motion by the 2/3rd requirement. Article 21 will be the next article discussed and then will go back to Article 5 on the warrant.

Article 21: Ayer Shirley Regional School District Agreement Amendment

MOTION 1: Moved by Elizabeth Quinty, seconded by James Quinty, to approve Article 21 as written in the warrant. Motion on warrant was "We the petitioners wish to amend the "Agreement between the Towns of Ayer and Shirley with respect to the formation of a regional school district which was approved in March of 2010 and amended in September/October of 2012. This amendment request will follow the procedure outlined in Section XV of the agreement, specifically amendment by petition of 10 percent of the registered voters.

Striking the entirety of Section X: Incurring of Debt, and replacing it with:

"The School Committee is empowered to incur debt consistent with the terms and conditions of M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 16. Except for the incurring of temporary debt in anticipation of revenue, the process that appears in subsection (d) of Chapter 71, Section 16 will be followed."

PRIOR TO TAKING VOTE ON MOTION 1, A SECOND MOTION WAS MADE.

MOTION 2: Moved by Jonathan Deforge, seconded by Erin Deforge, to postpone the article indefinitely.

Hand count on Motion 2: Moderator declared motion lost by hand count not counted by counters.

Some discussion ensued regarding Article 21, Motion 1.

PRIOR TO TAKING VOTE ON MOTION 1, A THIRD MOTION WAS MADE.

MOTION 3: Motion made by unknown member of audience to Move the Question, seconded by a second unknown member of audience.

Hand Count on Motion 3: Moderator declared motion passed by hand count not counted by counters.

VOTE ON ARTICLE 21 (MOTION 1): Vote was 39 in favor; 21 against. Moderator declared article passed by majority by hand count by counters.

Article 5: Approve Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (See Appendix C)

Moved by Andree Jean Jacques, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve and accept the FY 2022 Capital Budget, together with the capital budget for the ensuing four years, said five-year plan known as the Capital Improvement Plan, as printed in the insert to the warrant.

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority

Article 6: Appropriate Capital Items for FY2022

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, that the Town vote to approve Article 6 as printed in the warrant, with the chart setting forth the project or purchase and equipping of each item in the amount, all to be funded through borrowing as further described in Article 6, including all incidental and related expenses, with each line to constitute a separate appropriation. Article 6 in the warrant, that included the chart, stated "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/ or borrow a sum or sums of money for the purpose of purchasing and equipping items or undertaking projects, including all related and

incidental expenses, as set forth in the FY22 CIP, and, as may be necessary in connection therewith, to authorize the Town to enter into lease/purchase agreements for such items for terms of up to or exceeding three years, all as set forth below; to the extent borrowing is identified as the funding source for any item or project, to authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Board of Selectmen, to borrow said funds pursuant to G.L. c.44, §§7 or 8 or any other enabling authority, and to issue bonds and notes therefor; and further, that any premium received upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with G.L. c.44, §20, thereby reducing by a like amount the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs; provided, however, that the appropriation authorized hereunder shall be expressly contingent upon approval by the voters of the Town at an election of a so-called Proposition 2 1/2 debt exclusion question; and, further, that the Board of Selectmen be authorized to enter into such contracts and agreements as shall in its judgment be necessary to effectuate the intent of this article, or take any other action relative thereto.

Departme	Requested Project/Equipment	Estimated	Funding
DPW	2022 Freightliner Truck Plow	\$239,782	Bond
Fire	Headquarters Façade Repair	\$20,660	Bond
Police	Interceptor w/2021 Hybrid Cruiser	\$56,615	Bond
Police	Radar Trailer	\$11,287	Bond

Total Cost FY22 CIP

\$328,344.00

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by $2/3^{rd}$ by voice vote (borrow article)

Article 7: Council on Aging Revolving Fund

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 7 as printed in the warrant. Article 7 stated "to vote, pursuant to GL c.44, s.53E1/2 to create a new revolving fund to be known as the Council on Aging Revolving Fund, and for such purposes to revise Section XXXIII of the General Bylaws, subsection 6, by inserting, at the end of the chart set forth therein, a new row as follows, and with the expenditure limit set forth therein to be applicable from fiscal year to fiscal year unless sooner revised by Town Meeting prior to the start of the then-upcoming fiscal year:

Revolving Fund	Department	Entity	Fiscal Year
Program/Purpose	Receipts To Be	Authorized To	Expenditure
and Name	Credited To	Spend	Limit
	Fund		

Name: Council on	All monies,	Council on Aging	\$20,000
Aging	gifts, and fees	Director	
	received and		
Purpose: Providing	charged for		
Council on Aging	programming to		
programming.	be credited to		
	fund		

Voice Vote: Moderator declared passed by majority

Article 8: Appropriate Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget for FY 2022

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, that the Town vote to approve Article 8 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated "To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the total sum of \$823,212 to defray Sewer Enterprise direct and indirect costs, and, to transfer the sum of \$148,000 from Retained Earnings and \$122,288 from Sewer Betterments and to raise the sum of \$552,924 from FY2022 Wastewater receipts to fund the total costs of the Sewer Enterprise Fund for FY2022 as follows, or take any action relative thereto.

			FY2021	FY2022	FY202
Line Number	Department	Description	Approved	Budget Request	Fin Con Recommen Bala
	•	•		3 1	_
2020-69	Sewer Enterprise	Personnel	21,528	21,918	
	Sewer Enterprise		600,736	606,006	
2020-71	Sewer Enterprise	Debt	850,903	195,288	
Subtotal	Sewer	~ · · · · · ·	1,473,167	823,212	FinCom Approva

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority

Article 9: Appropriate Ambulance Department Enterprise Fund Budget For FY2022

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, that the Town vote to approve Article 9 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated "To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$384,585 to defray Ambulance Enterprise direct costs and indirect costs, and, to transfer the sum of \$40,000 from Retained Earnings and to raise the sum of \$344,585 from FY2022

Ambulance Enterprise receipts to fund the total costs of the Ambulance Enterprise Fund for FY2022 as follows; or to take any other action relative thereto.

		FY2021	FY2022	FY2022
Line Numbe Department	Description	Approved	Budget Request	Fin Con Recommend Bala
2020-72 Ambulance	Personnel	213,617	294,572	
2020-73 Ambulance	Ordinary	46,195	62,698	
2020-74 Ambulance	Debt Service	10,000	27,315	
Subtota Ambulance		269,812	384,585	FinCom Approval

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority

Article 10: Appropriate for the Curbside Solid Waste/Recycling Enterprise FY 2022 Budget

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 10 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated "vote to appropriate the sum of \$430,500 to defray Curbside Solid Waste/Recycling Enterprise direct costs, and to raise the sum of \$387,650 from FY2022 Curbside Solid Waste/Recycling Enterprise receipts, transfer the sum of \$4,320 from the DEP Recovery Program account and raise and appropriate the sum of \$38,530 for the total costs of the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund for FY2022, as follows; or take any other action relative thereto.

		FY2021	FY2022	FY2022 Fin Com Recommende
Line Numbe Department	Description	Approved	Budget Request	Balance Budget
2020-75 Trash Enterprise	Personnel	-	-	-
2020-76 Trash Enterprise	Ordinary	412,500	430,500	
2020-77 Trash Enterprise	Debt Service	-		-
Subtota Trash		412,500	430,500	FinCom Approval

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority.

Article 11: Solid Waste & Recycling Outstanding

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to transfer from the Recycling Revolving Fund the sum of \$14,836 to cover a FY2021 deficit in the Solid Waste & Recycling Enterprise Account.

Voice Vote: Moderator declared passed by Majority.

Article 12: To Fund the Other Post Benefits Trust (OPEB)

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 12 as printed in the warrant. Article 12 states "vote to transfer from Free Cash a sum of \$10,000 to be added to the Post-Employment Benefits Trust Fund."

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority

Article 13: Accept Chapter 90 Funds

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 13 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated that the Town will "vote to authorize the Town to accept and expend any funds allotted or to be allotted to the Town by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under the so-called Chapter 90 program for the construction, reconstruction, and improvement of Town roads; or take any other action relative thereto."

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority

Article 14: PEG Access Receipt Reserved for Appropriation

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to appropriate from the PEG Access Cable Receipt Reserved for Appropriation Account the sum of \$55,620.85 for cable related expenses in FY 22.

Voice Vote: Moderator Declared Passed by Majority

Article 15: Amend the General By-Law, Article VI, Health and Sanitation, Sections 9.0 and 9.7

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 15 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated "To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town General By-law as set forth below for the purpose

of revising Article VI, Health and Sanitation, Section 9.0 and Section 9.7, as follows:

SECTION 9.0: By changing the 3rd sentence of Section 9.0 FROM: "Any owner or keeper of an unlicensed dog who fails to obtain this annual dog license by the end of January of each year shall be charged a delinquency or late fee in addition to the normal license fee" TO: "Any owner or keeper of an unlicensed dog who fails to obtain this annual dog license by the end of March of each year shall be charged a delinquency or late fee in addition to the normal license fee", or take any action thereon or in relation thereto.

SECTION 9.7: By changing the term from "Public Nuisance" to "Nuisance Dog" along with the following definition changes. FROM: "Public Nuisance - Any dog shall be deemed a public nuisance when attacking, barking at, chasing, or frightening a person or a domestic animal while such dog is on property other than that of such dog's owner or keeper; when destroying property; when on a public school ground and not under the full control of its owner or keeper, whether the dog is leashed or unleashed; if it shall persistently chase moving vehicles; or if it shall persistently or recurrently bark or howl between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on more than two occasions within a seven-day period. Such barking or howling in a subsequent seven day period shall constitute a separate instance of nuisance. Further, any unspayed female dog in season, shall be deemed a public nuisance when not confined indoors by the owner thereof, or housed in a veterinary hospital or registered kennel. TO: "Nuisance dog", a dog that: (i) by excessive barking or other disturbance, is a source of annoyance to a sick person residing in the vicinity; or (ii) by excessive barking, causing damage or other interference, a reasonable person would find such behavior disruptive to one's quiet and peaceful enjoyment; or (iii) has threatened or attacked livestock, a domestic animal or a person, but such threat or attack was not a grossly disproportionate reaction under all the circumstances."

MOTION 2 MADE BY JENNIFER MCGUINNESS, SECONDED BY SOMEONE IN THE AUDIENCE, TO TABLE THE ARTICLE.

Ms McGuinness explained that she was the Animal Control Officer for 3 years previously and knew that the entire section on the dogs in the General Bylaw needed to be rewritten, not just this small portion, and should be brought back when all section fixed.

2/3rd vote needed to table an article.

Hand Count: Moderator Declared Motion Passed by 2/3rd vote without count from counters. Article 15 tabled.

Article 16: Village Cemetery at Shaker Meadows Survey

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 16 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated "To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$5,700 to survey the property, including all incidental and related expenses, or take any other action relative thereto."

Voice Vote: Moderator Declared Passed by Majority

Article 17: Amend Article XXXIV, Illicit Discharge to the Municipal Storm Drain Systems, of the General Town Bylaws

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to vote to approve Article 17 as printed in the warrant. The warrant stated "vote to amend various sections of Article XXXIV of the General Town Bylaws, Illicit Discharge to the Municipal Storm Drain Systems, by inserting the underlined language and deleting the strikethrough language, as follows, and making no additional amendments to the Bylaw as approved by the Attorney General, or take any action relative thereto:

Section 1.D. Authority.

This <u>Bylaw</u> is adopted under the authority granted by the Home Rule Amendment of the Massachusetts Constitution and the Home Rule Procedures Act, and pursuant to the regulations of the Federal Clean Water Act found at 40 CFR 122.34. The Planning Board shall administer, implement and enforce or delegate authority to enforce this bylaw. Any powers granted to or duties imposed upon the designee may be delegated in writing to other qualified employees or agents of the Town of Shirley.

Section 2. Definitions

Enforcement Authority: The Director of Public Works and respective employees or agents, designated to administer, implement, enforce this Bylaw.

Stormwater Committee: A committee comprised of the Director of Public Works, a representative from the Planning Board, and a resident, with the

authority to promulgate rules, regulations and a permitting process to effectuate the purposes of this Bylaw.

Section 5. Prohibited Activities

A. Illegal Discharges. No person shall dump, discharge, cause or allow to be dumped or discharged any pollutant or non-stonnwater stormwater discharge into the municipal storm drain system, watercourse, or into the waters of the Commonwealth.

Section 9. Enforcement

- A. The Enforcement Authority, designated by the Planning Board, shall will enforce this bBylaw, and the regulations promulgated thereunder, as well as the terms and conditions of all permits, notices, and orders, and may pursue all civil and criminal remedies for such violation.
- D. **Timeline.** If the designated Enforcement Authority determines that abatement or remediation of contamination is required, the order shall will set forth a deadline for completion of the abatement or remediation. Said order shall will further advise that, should the violator or property owner fail to abate or perform remediation within the specified deadline, the Town of Shirley may, at its option, undertake such work, and all costs incurred by the Town shall will be charged to the violator, to be recouped through all available means, including the placement of a lien on the property.

Within 30 days after completing all measures necessary to abate the violation or to perform remediation, the violator and the property owner will be notified of the costs incurred by the Town, including administrative costs. The violator or property owner may file a written protest objecting to the amount or basis of costs with the designated Enforcement Authority within 30 days of receipt of the notification of the costs incurred. If the amount due is not received by the expiration of the time in which to file a protest or within 30 days following a decision of the designated Enforcement Authority affirming or reducing the costs, or from a final decision of a court of competent jurisdiction, the costs may constitute a lien on the owner's property for the Town of Shirley may impose a municipal-charges lien on the property, pursuant to General Laws Chapter 40, Section 58, for the total amount of said costs not paid by the violator or property owner. Interest shall will begin to accrue on

any unpaid costs at the statutory rate after the 31st day at which the costs first become due.

Voice Vote: Moderator Declared Passed by Majority

Article 18: Conservation Land Acquisition Fund

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$15,000 to be added to the Conservation Land Acquisition Fund.

Voice Vote: Moderator Declared Passed by Majority

Article 19: Amendment to current Shirley Bylaw, Article II (See Appendix D)

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 19 as written in the warrant. The warrant stated "To see if the Town will vote to amend Article II, Section 4 of the General Bylaws by inserting a new section 4.1 to clarify the jurisdiction of the Finance Committee, as follows, or to take any other action relative thereto:

"In addition, and pursuant to Mass General Laws, Part I, Title VII, Chapter 39, Section 16, the Finance Committee shall consider any or all municipal questions for the purpose of making reports or recommendations to the town."

Voice Vote: Moderator Declared Passed by Majority

Article 20: Nuisance Bylaw

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to approve Article 20 as printed in the warrant and detailed in Attachment E. The warrant stated "To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws to insert a new bylaw entitled, "Nuisance Bylaw" which will impose minimum maintenance requirements for properties in all business districts, but will exclude single-family homes, as set forth in more detail Appendix E, and to authorize or take any other action relative thereto".

MOTION 2: Motion made by Melissa Lynch, seconded by Mike Swanton, to amend Section 3, end of third line to add "so as to prevent a" after "in a safe and sanitary condition" so that the portion of the sentence reads "...in a safe and sanitary condition so as to prevent a hazardous or blighted area..."

Vote on Motion 2: Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority

Vote on Main Motion: Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority.

NOTE: ARTICLE 21 ALREADY VOTED ON AFTER ARTICLE 4

Article 22: Transfer to the General Stabilization Fund

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$50,000 to the General Stabilization Fund.

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority

Article 23: Transfer to the Capital Stabilization Fund

Andree Jean Jacques moved, seconded by Debra Flagg, to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$25,000 to the Capital Stabilization Fund.

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority

Motion made by audience member, seconded by another audience member, to dissolve Annual Town Meeting at 8:57 p.m.

Voice Vote: Moderator declared Passed by Majority.

Respectfully submitted,

William C. Oelfke Shirley Town Clerk

NOTE: AG LETTER DATED 8/4/2021 APPROVED ARTICLES 2 (IN PART, SEE ARTICLE 2 ABOVE), 7, 17, 19 AND 20.